

CONFIDENTIALDEPARTMENT OF STATE
OPERATIONS CENTERLEBANON WORKING GROUP

Situation Report No. 160

Lebanon Situation as of 0600 EDT, August 20, 1982

Military Situation: Beirut was quiet last night and this morning. No firing was heard from Yaze. The Ministry of Information in the Hamra area of west Beirut escaped damage yesterday when a car laden with more than 400 pounds of TNT was discovered and disarmed. The Voice of Lebanon reports a clash yesterday in Hamra between members of the PLO and the Arab Socialist Union in which three people were wounded. Police report that the port crossing is open for military and diplomatic cars. The Galerie Simaan and museum crossings are open to all in both directions. Beirut radio in Arabic reported that the Israelis have cut off the Dar al-Baydar road at about 0930 local time and prevented all cars from entering or leaving the "al-Biq'a area." The same source said that Syria, "whose borders are protected by a Soviet umbrella," has reinforced its forces in the al-Biq'a area with large quantities of new weapons and field fortifications, but speculates that this might be a "political game."

Diplomatic Developments: The PLO has affirmed to the media that the two Israeli prisoners will be released today. At 1150 Beirut time (0550 Washington time) the ICRC in Beirut was in possession of nine Israeli bodies which had been the subject of negotiations and hoped to receive the two prisoners "in an hour or so." PLO sources also told Reuter that the PLO "had no intention of holding up implementation of the plan" which begins tomorrow morning with the arrival of the vanguard of 350 French legionnaires.

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State Dept. review completed

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4PM-ISRAELI RELEASES;120

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4ISRAELI PILOT AND SOLDIER FREED

BEIRUT; LEBANON (AP) - THE PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION TODAY FREED A CAPTURED ISRAELI PILOT AND A KIDNAPPED SOLDIER; CLEARING THE WAY FOR A U.S.-GUARANTEED PLO EVACUATION FROM WEST BEIRUT TO START SATURDAY; PRIME MINISTER SHAFIK HAZZAN ANNOUNCED.

HAZZAN SAID IN A NATIONALLY-TELEVISED STATEMENT THAT THE REMAINS OF ISRAELI SOLDIERS REQUESTED BY ISRAEL ALSO WERE DELIVERED BY THE PLO TO THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS IN THE LEBANESE CAPITAL.

ISRAEL HAD DEMANDED THE RETURN OF THE TWO ISRAELI PRISONERS AND THE REMAINS OF SOLDIERS KILLED IN LEBANON BEFORE THE START OF THE EVACUATION OF AN ESTIMATED 7,000 GUERRILLAS COULD BEGIN UNDER A PLAN THE ISRAELI CABINET ENDORSED ON THURSDAY.

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ISRAEL: PLO CONFIRMS PRISONERS, BODIES TO BE TRANSFERRED TODAY

TA201118 JERUSALEM DOMESTIC SERVICE IN HEBREW 1100 GMT 20 AUG 82

(TEXT) A PLO SPOKESMAN HAS SAID THAT THE BODIES OF FOUR ISRAELI SOLDIERS THAT ISRAEL DEMANDS TO RECEIVE TODAY WERE IN A BUILDING BOMBARDED BY ISRAEL AND TURNED INTO A PILE OF DEBRIS. HE SAID THAT THE PLO HAS ASKED THE RED CROSS TO HELP WITH THE ATTEMPTS TO RETRIEVE THE FOUR BODIES FROM THE DEBRIS. THE SPOKESMAN CLAIMED HE DID NOT KNOW EXACTLY WHERE THE BUILDING IS LOCATED.

ANOTHER PLO SPOKESMAN CONFIRMED THAT TODAY THE TERRORISTS WOULD HAND OVER THE PILOT AHI'AZ AND THE KIDNAPPED SOLDIER TO ISRAEL. HE DID NOT SAY WHEN THIS WOULD TAKE PLACE. HE ADDED THAT THE HEAD OF THE PLO'S MILITARY POLICE, (ABU HANID), IS IN CHARGE OF THE ARRANGEMENTS TO TRANSFER THE PRISONERS AND THE BODIES. HE ADDED THAT THE PRISONERS AND BODIES WOULD BE HANDED OVER TO THE RED CROSS AT THE GALERIE SHIM'AN CROSSING POINT.

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